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SUBJECT: WHAT WENT WRONG BETWEEN THE AU AND THE G-4?

JAPANESE AMBASSADOR BRIEFS CHARGE'

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Thomas P. Furey for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: According to the Japanese Ambassador to Nigeria, who was at the AU Summit in Addis Ababa, emotional appeals about Africans standing up for their rights against Western "colonialists" carried the day in persuading the AU to stick to its demand for veto rights for any new permanent members of the UN Security Council. Tanaka also reported that there are tensions within the G-4 as a result of an unauthorized concession in Addis Ababa by the Brazilian Foreign Minister, who agreed (supposedly on behalf of the G-4) to support an additional non-permanent member for the UNSC. The Japanese Government plans to step back and let the dust settle, but is confident that a solution satisfactory to the G-4 will be approved by the General Assembly before Christmas. End Summary.

¶2. (C) The Japanese Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Akio Tanaka, briefed Charge Furey and British Charge Martin Shearman August 11 on his observations about the African Union summit in Addis Ababa and UN Security Council reform. Ambassador Tanaka served at the Japanese mission to the UN in the late 1990s and was sent by the Japanese Government to lobby the AU on behalf of the G-4.

¶3. (C) Tanaka said the Nigerians were confident as they went into the summit that they could persuade the AU to agree to drop the demand that the new permanent members have veto authority. He said his interlocutors, including the Sudanese Ambassador, who were in the conference hall told him that several small countries insisted that the African members would have to have the veto. He attributed this to emotional appeals by some representatives: since Western powers had colonized Africa, it was now time for African countries to stand up for their rights. When recounting this, Tanaka shook his head in frustration and noted that "even Chad," which cannot vote in the General Assembly because of failure to pay dues, took this position.

¶4. (C) As an aside, Tanaka noted with some bemusement that he has lobbied with several African ambassadors in Abuja about the veto issue and that many of them, "who did not seem to be following the reform issue closely," reacted viscerally against the idea that Nigeria would have veto rights in the UN Security Council. The African ambassadors reacted with comments such as: "Why should a country that cannot even generate electricity on a regular basis be given veto power in the UN?"

¶5. (C) There are tensions within the G-4 now, according to Tanaka, as a result of an unauthorized maneuver by the Brazilian Foreign Minister in Addis Ababa. The night before the summit began, the Foreign Minister met with the South African and Nigerian delegates and agreed on behalf of the G-4 to a proposal to add an additional non-voting member (which would be the 26th member under this proposal) to the UNSC. Tanaka said he and the Germans and Indians were surprised to learn about this the next day. He noted that the Brazilian Foreign Minister had served previously as ambassador to the UN and "unfortunately thinks he knows more than the rest of us" about UN issues.

¶6. (C) The Japanese Government plans to take a step back right now and let the dust settle, Tanaka said, adding, "there is no way this can be resolved by September." Nevertheless, he and his Japanese colleagues are confident that enough support can be lined up for a solution satisfactory to the G-4 to be approved by the General Assembly before Christmas. He said Japan's sense of urgency on this issue arose from the incident in 1998 when North Korea launched a missile in the direction of Japan and the belief of Japanese delegates to the UN that their presence on the Security Council at that time helped greatly in representing their interests.

FUREY